



Background

The Mountain View Corridor (MVC) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) began in 2003 and is being completed to address anticipated growth and projected transportation demand in west Salt Lake and northwest Utah counties. The MVC is approximately 35 miles long and stretches from I-80 in Salt Lake County to just north of Utah Lake in Utah County.

The Alternatives

After using anticipated transportation performance, potential environmental impacts, public input and other criteria to help identify and narrow a list of potential solutions, six potential roadway alignments—two in Salt Lake County and four in Utah County have been identified. The team continues to work to select the best roadway alignment for both counties. Transit also plays an important role in the Salt Lake County solutions.

The Funding Shortfall

While the MVC team works on identifying the best solution for the Corridor, it is already clear that funding will be a challenge. As travel on Utah's highways continues to grow almost twice as fast as the state's surging population, demand for transportation infrastructure is increasing while the resources available to pay cannot keep up. Facing a \$16.5 billion transportation funding deficit through the year 2030, UDOT is exploring new sources of funding for new roads in order to address the state's transportation needs.

Managed Lanes

The 2003-04 Legislative Transportation Taskforce studied statewide transportation needs and funding options. The Taskforce identified possible tools to deal with the transportation funding shortfall, including increased statewide sales tax, increased fuel tax, motor vehicle related sales tax, increased vehicle title registration and allowing local option sales tax for transportation. The legislature also recommended a "Managed Lane Study." Managed lanes can address the current and future travel demand by cost-effectively maximizing transportation capacity. Managed lanes can reduce congestion on a transportation system and provide new revenue sources. One managed lane strategy the study explored was tolling, a relatively new funding concept in Utah where users must pay a toll to enter a limited-access roadway or bridge. Various corridors statewide were identified with managed lane potential, including the MVC.

Funding the Mountain View Corridor

It is unlikely that one funding tool on its own will solve the problem. The ultimate solution will more likely be a combination of many tools. As part of examining impacts of potential alternatives, the project team is analyzing a toll road as one of many funding options for the MVC. Six basic steps make up the process of a tolling analysis to determine the level of tolling feasibility. These include determining technologies such as Electronic Toll Collection, identifying toll rates, conducting traffic analysis, determining costs and construction phasing, performing financial analysis and determining finance and operation structure, such as public-private partnerships.

Why Study Tolling Now?

If tolling is not explored now, this funding tool will not be available and an additional study would be required if tolling were chosen later. The project team is studying tolled

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and non-tolled alternatives in the EIS in order to fully understand the impacts of both. This includes studying socio-economic impacts and how traffic patterns would be impacted if the facility were a toll road. Including tolling in the EIS allows for an open and informed discussion, as impacts of all alternatives will be disclosed to allow for a fair comparison.

Has a Decision Been Made?

No decisions have yet been made regarding tolling. The process for a tolling analysis is underway. Public education efforts related to transportation funding and the Mountain View Corridor will include local town hall meetings.

(end)

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